FANTASY AND LITERATURE, BY PHIL STONG

The Saturday Review of Literature

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Vol. XXIII No. 13 New York, Saturday, January 18, 1941 Fifteen Cents

"OUT OF THE NIGHT"
By Jan Valtin
Reviewed by Freda Utley

"THE DONKEY INSIDE"
By Ludwig Bemelmans
Reviewed by Louis J. Halle, Jr.

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Reviewed by N. L. Rothman

"SHORT STORIES FROM THE NEW YORKER"
Reviewed by Basil Davenport

This drawing is from the cover of "Out of the Night," by Jan Valtin. Freda Utley finds it "an exciting, poignant, and tragic personal history." *(See page 5)*

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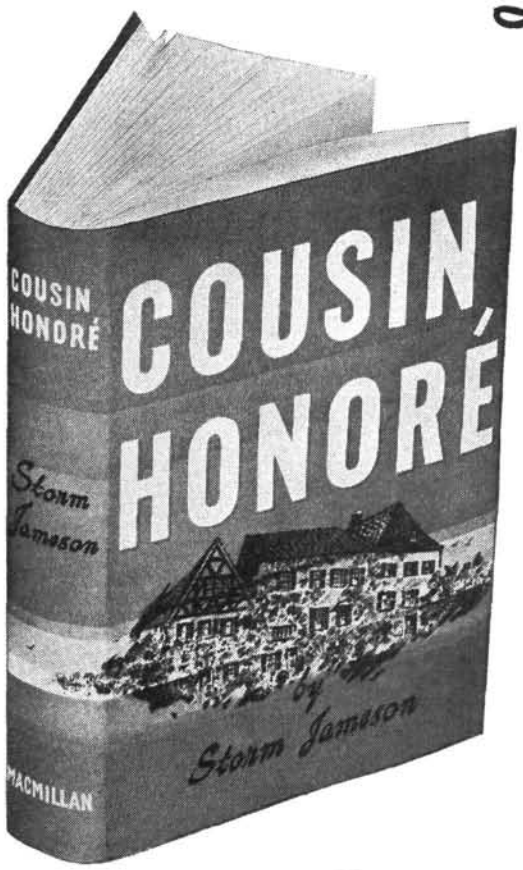
COUSIN HONORÉ



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The Saturday Review of Literature

Fantasy and Literature

PHIL STONG

SOME forty years ago a young Negro woke up in his mother's little house on the river bottoms at the edge of Keosauqua, Iowa, in a very curious frame of mind. He ate his breakfast in silence and then went out to the shed and got a hammer and a pocketful of nails.

"Lob," said his mother, Minnie, "what are you foolin' around with? Why ain't you goin' to the mill?"

"Because," said Lob, "last night I dreamed I was fixin' the pickets on the fence and a hearse went by and went down to the mill. Old hearse ain't goin' to bring me back from the mill."

A few hours later the mill boilers burst loose. Before Lob had finished patching his fence, Charley Dodd's hearse went by on its way to the mill to gather what was left of a number of victims.

There are a hundred people or so alive who know that Lob, in spite of his general steadiness and his family's exigent need for his earnings, skipped one day's work at the mill because he had dreamed that he saw a hearse going by on its way to the mill.

* * *

One very hot summer day, my wife called me at my office at *Editor & Publisher* in the Times Building in New York City and asked me to walk up to Ed Balzerit's office on Fiftieth Street and pick up her beach robe, which Betty had borrowed the week before.

I had a great deal to say about this project. In the first place, the Balzerits lived about thirty steps from us on Eleventh Street, and Ed could take the robe there; in the second place, there was no possibility that we would go swimming before the week-end; in the third place, my wife had another beach robe, and so on and so on. Virginia was inexorable and even passionately so, for once; it sounded as if the beach robe were a coronation gown and the Archbishop of Canterbury were waiting.

At five o'clock, grumbling low curses, instead of taking the subway home, I walked seven blocks uptown to Ed's office to get the robe. I was probably crossing Forty-third Street when the subway train which I would otherwise have taken scattered pieces of passengers all over the I. R. T. tracks. When I got home, after a long, hot walk, my wife was sleeping. I woke her gently; she had been crying in her sleep.

"I know," she said. "Where was the wreck?"

She had been napping almost from the minute the wreck occurred; there were no extras out and no way she could have known about the accident. Her subconscious might have caught something from the shrieking of ambulances into St. Vincent's, even in her sleep, but her subconscious would have had to be an unusually clever one to tell her about that disaster—there were about twenty people killed as I remember—a half hour before the wreck when she urged a completely unreasonable errand in a completely unusual and Xantippic manner to keep me off that train.

* * *

These are the only occurrences within my own experience, outside of some poker runs, that have struck me as impressive evidence of premonition; even in these I do not assent to intervention from the Other World, for in the New Science we have a suggestion of how "premonitions" might occur by some rare extension of our numerous undefined but ordinary psychic potentialities. Too much fantastic literature now is engaged with the idea, recently become respectable, that Time is a dimension and that all events exist simultaneously on a plane—the other favorite figure is a spiral—over which we move in the figuratively limited terms of three dimensions, without being able to glimpse the whole four-dimensional entity, or cut across the spiral, of the Time dimension.

It may be perfectly true that Time is a dimension, or that Being is Time, as the Bergsonians said. Talking about such things confuses me; so we will have no more of it, but if the new physics and philosophies shoud chance to be reasonable one can imagine that some critical and dramatic situations might transcend out conventional faculties and come to perception of such high events through faculties which have not yet furnished enough data for serious examination.

Such matters are still in the legitimate field of sober philosophy or research. It is not impossible that preperception may sometime be metaphysically rationalized; it is a cheap and ancient figure, but "psychic" impacts independent of our ordinary senses are not nearly as strange to us as wireless telegraphy would have been

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to anyone living much before the time of Volta and the differentiation of dynamic and static electricities. The notion that such "psychic" impacts are electrical is well enough; perhaps they are some other effect as strange to us as Hertzian waves or cathode rays would have been to our great-grandfathers; strange to us as they may not be to our grandsons.

THE first requirement of a good fantastic story—and half the magazines which print these stories neglect the fact—is that it should not be even remotely possible. It seems to me that a fantastic story should be consistent within its own definitions but that these definitions should be incredible. The enjoyment of such stories rests on one's acceptance of an initial law which is completely irrational but which is put down in a calm and matter of fact manner as an obvious circumstance which you must accept if you are to play the game and have any fun out of it.

Having put down this first rule for writing these stories, I suggest that it is also a first rule for reading the stories. Anyone who starts out by saying, "But this is impossible," should be deprived of all Grimm, Lewis Carroll, Bierce, Wilde, Poe, Hoffman, Dickens, Shakespeare—and so on and so on—and put to work chopping wood by the cord or running a comptometer. He'll never be President or succeed in medicine, law, or most of the interesting imaginative pursuits.

For those nearsighted people who believe that a fantasy is a brittle thing, God wot, whose principal appeal is to weak minds or mildly addled ones willing to make the concession described for the sake of a sensation, I may say first that no such story requires as many concessions as are regularly made to Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey, Philo Vance, Lupin and the whole gallery of super-dicks who, aside from their remarkably unreasonable performances in general behavior, are gifted with the extra-perception which invariably attracts their attention to circumstances of hidden significance, as if they were in rapport with the murderer. At one time I went through a short season of detective mysteries but I found that they strained my credulity and so I returned to fantasies.

As far as that is concerned, anyone with the least experience, in the world and in narrative structure, could take almost any novel, good or bad, and give a brief analysis of what the author says happened, from his premises, and what would much more probably have happened without the patient guidance of the literary parent. As far as their being "fairy tales" is concerned, fantastic stories are quite as worthy of serious reading as the works of William Shakespeare, P. G. Wodehouse, or Ernest Hemingway—to collect, casually, from three strata and manners.

It is not necessary to consider the blatant implausibility of all "hero-gets-the-girl" literature. There is such a thing as successful matrimony, but usually by evolution of the indefinite article; hero gets "a" girl—if she lasts she becomes "the." Curiously, fantasies seldom indulge in the Sentimental Fallacy. Of course, there have been plenty of fantastic love stories, but somehow the casual fantasy does not often tolerate the overshadowing presence of the perennial fantasy. I think Frank Stockton wrote more of these than most standard authors—but his fantasy in his best stories was generally an appliqué on a human situation, rather than a fantasy in itself, though he did some good ones in the pure school. We must make the evident differentiation here between the story in which ordinary human relationships are affected by a fantastic development, and stories in which fantastic premises are worked out in realistically human terms. Both deserve to be called fantastic stories but the difference is that between such stories as "Markheim," which is not really fantastic at all, but merely allegorical, and "The Monkey's Paw," or "The Bottle Imp," or "Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde." In one the trick is disclosed to end an ordinary story; in the other the story is told from a fantastic premise.

The modern school, especially in America, whose style August Derleth accredits to Mary Wilkins Freeman, has gone in largely for the homely tale which winds up with a fantastic or so-called supernatural turn in the last paragraph or sentence. Ambrose Bierce, in his leisurely moments, was an exponent of this story; with his native sense of economy he stripped the yarn of the niceties and details in which Mrs. Freeman and Mrs. Wharton indulged and finished a story with a revengeful rifle shot from the other world, or the print of a dead woman's three-toed foot, or, in his Owl Creek classic, with the information that the character whose adventures the reader has been following has just died of hanging.

These turns do not seem to me to get the most out of fantasy. Without some structurally dubious forewarning some of the tales would be dull indeed. Suppose one ended the Owl Creek story with the man in his wife's arms and a casual remark that he has had a deuce of a time to escape from the Union soldiers: there is nothing but a small tale. Does the fact, belated-

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Company, Inc., 420 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. Harrison Smith, President; James Nelson, Vice-President and Treasurer; Amy Loveman, Secretary; George Dilkes, Business Manager. Subscription, $4 a year; $4.50 in Canada; $5 in other countries. At least 3 weeks' notice required for changes of address; both old and new addresses must be given. Printed in U. S. A. Vol. XXIII, No. 13, Jan. 18, 1941. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Revolutions and Reality

OUT OF THE NIGHT. By Jan Valtin. New York: Alliance Book Corporation. 1941. 841 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by FREDA UTLEY

THIS book is not only a historical document showing the importance of the role played by the Communists in bringing the Nazis to power, not only an exciting, poignant, and tragic personal history, not only a unique study of Communist psychology but an important documentary account of the inner workings of the Comintern and of its activities all over the globe.

The reviewer who could do this book justice would have to be a historian, a literary critic, a student of political science and psychology, and, in addition, have had the experience of having worked actively in the revolutionary movements of the post-war world.

But everyone must marvel that a man who has lived for twenty years as an active revolutionary, has suffered physical and mental tortures which would have driven most men insane, and whom one would have expected to have been corrupted and broken by his experiences, should have been able to write so noble and sincere a book.

One is also astonished that a man who went to sea in his teens should be able to write so well and to translate into words his understanding of men and their motives. One feels throughout the book that one is living with that diverse assemblage of professional revolutionaries, idealists, young and ignorant enthusiasts, dedicated youth, and cynical careerists and libertines, G.P.U. spies, decoys, gangsters and assassins, which made up the world subject to Moscow.

"Out of the Night" is the life story not only of Jan Valtin himself but of the whole lost generation of German youth which came to manhood in a broken country where the old standards, values, and loyalties had been destroyed, and who were driven by the desolation and hopelessness around them to give themselves body and soul to the Parties which promised a new world or a new Germany. After reading these pages one understands better not only the Communists but the Nazis. Jan Valtin shortly before he joins the Communist Party in 1923, debates with himself:

> Shall I run away from this diseased country? Or shall I join the forces which are actively attacking the wrongs which make my blood rebel? One road tempted me with the free and happy countries I had seen during my seafaring years. The other filled me with the fervor and high expectation of revolutionary youth. I felt a strangulating loneliness. I yearned for a place where I could belong.

In the jail where he is consigned as a detected stowaway he meets the Communist Zympanski who is rousing the seamen without ships, the workless dockers and all the rest of the hopeless, the starved and the homeless of ruined Germany, by telling them: "With us a man can find awareness of his own strength. He is no longer a homeless cur. A man is born to fight."

To the Communist Party militant and idealist youths like Valtin gave themselves heart and soul, considering themselves as loyal soldiers of the world revolution dedicated to the emancipation of mankind at any cost of personal sacrifice. They regarded their leaders as heroic idealists, as "officers in the great army of freedom." Soon they recognized no authority except that of the Party chiefs. "All concepts of moral obligation toward men and groups outside of the movement were utterly weeded out. . . . Men must struggle with every means at their disposal, shying at no lawless deed so long as it would further the cause, giving no quarter until the revolution had triumphed." The young Communists delivered their minds and bodies and souls to the Comintern as other young men were delivering theirs to Hitler. Faust sold his soul to the devil for earthly pleasures; but for the young Communist the reward was to be the emancipation of all mankind, as to the Nazi it was to be the emancipation of Germany. In the end, after years of service as soldier-serfs of the Comintern, which became undistinguishable from the Russian Secret Service, it was abundantly clear that the Communists were risking their lives in Nazi Germany, not for the world revolution, but to "gratify the lust for power of the Stalin clique." The professional revolutionaries were by then so perverted in their souls, so irretrievably damned by their fanatical faith, that they could not withdraw from the movement which had betrayed them but to which "we had given all our youth, all our hopes, all the enthusiasm and selflessness we had once possessed." Again and again in his narrative Valtin reverts to the theme that the idea of life outside the Party was intolerable even to the most disillusioned.

Once caught, it was at first psychologically and later physically impossible for the Communist who had become a member of the inner circle to escape. As the leaders of the Comintern became ever more unscrupulous, corrupt, callous to human suffering, and forgetful of their original aims, the revolutionary movement abroad was transformed into a secret arm of the Russian state, and the professional revolutionaries were forced to become spies, informers, betrayers of their friends, gangsters, thieves, and even murderers. Continually they were faced with the choice between personal integrity and what was represented to them by their leaders as revolutionary necessity. When Valtin is ordered by the G.P.U. representative in California to murder a man without even being allowed to know what crime he is supposed to have committed against the Party, a terrible conflict takes place in his mind between his blind sense of duty and the rebellion of his whole nature against committing a murder. His subconscious resolves the dilemma for him by leading him to assault his victim in broad daylight in a crowded street, knowing

Illustration by Salter from the book.

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that the assault must end in failure. For this he goes to prison in St. Quentin for four years, and has the opportunity to read the great literature of the world and to work out his own philosophy. This he sums up as "The joy of life is the joy of the experience that comes from feeling one's own strength." This one revealing sentence goes far to explain why it was that years later when he had fallen into the hands of the Gestapo, Valtin stood firm in spite of terrible tortures although he was by then devoid of all illusions concerning the Communist movement or the possibility of world revolution. His sentiments then were clearly those of the Communist leader, Edgar Andree, who went to his death in Germany after saying:

> When I march out my comrades will watch from the windows and say: "Look, Andree is going to the guillotine. They all want me to die as a real Bolshevik; to do that is my duty toward them. Not one of my boys will suspect that I am in truth nothing but a tired comedian of loyalty to a cause in which I have ceased to believe.

Perhaps it was Valtin's love for his wife Firelei which enabled him during his long years of service to the Comintern to preserve an inner core of sanity. Firelei, although forced to join the Party, never surrendered her personal integrity, or abandoned her instinctive desire for a normal life. Although she too accepted the most dangerous assignments given her by the Party and did not betray it when tortured, she never concealed her hatred of deceit and violence.

The story of Firelei, "the daughter of an impudent and fearless age," who abandoned her bourgeois family, lived with Valtin the conspiratorial life she loathed, gave up her beloved son and died in a Nazi prison, is beautifully told. The inevitable conflict between Valtin's love for Firelei and his Party duty is the stuff of great tragedy and the manner of the telling is restrained and fine and sincere. The reader is made to feel that their tragedy is an epitome of the mountains of wrecked lives buried beneath the epitaph: "The Party comes first."

All over the Seven Seas, in the United States, South America, Honolulu, Indo-China, China, and Europe, Valtin risked his life as he worked as a seaman in the service of the Comintern. But the core of the book, the sections of it which give it the greatest historical importance and are of greatest value to an understanding of the world of today, is his work in Germany. No other book more clearly reveals the aid which Stalin gave to Hitler before he won power, and which he must be giving today.

Alsatian Portrait

COUSIN HONORÉ. By Storm Jameson. New York: Macmillan. 1941. 315 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

MISS JAMESON tells us that this novel was begun last winter and finished just a week before the resignation of Reynaud's government; and that "On re-reading the book, I saw how many passages in it were prophetic. Others had become ironical." And, indeed, "Cousin Honoré" does indicate—often in a very telling way—some of the elements in the collapse of the French, and some of the elements which must, eventually, lead to their recovery and freedom. Yet the book does not depend upon prophecy or speculation for its success; nor yet, in spite of the author's modest statement to that effect, does it depend upon luck.

To be sure, Miss Jameson was fortunate in choosing for her theme the affairs of an Alsatian family who own an ironworks and are, therefore, deeply involved in the complexities (and, being Alsatian, in the ambiguities) of Franco-German economics. Greed, fear, privilege, short-sightedness, patriotism are the natural components of such a theme. The story begins at the end of the last war, with the suicide of the owner of the Burckheim ironworks, who has sold himself to the Germans; it ends at the beginning of this war, with the murder of a man who discovers that his selfishness and vanity have betrayed him to the Nazis. In between we watch the gradual drift of Burckheim affairs towards Germany, in spite of the efforts of two successive managers. As for the central character, Honoré Burckheim—with his love of the soil and his indifference to what is going on beyond his personal orbit, with his passions and his limitations, his nobility and his egotism—he is not an inadequate symbol of the strength and weakness of France.

What makes the novel worth reading, however, is not the timeliness of the theme so much as the fact that Miss Jameson—here perhaps more than in any other of her novels—emerges as a really distinguished writer. One is apt to remember the novel more as a portrait of Alsatians than as a story of intrigue. The fate of the ironworks is less important than the personalities who contrive or resist it. All writers, whether they are novelists or poets or historians, can only be called writers if they see, each one of them, a little differently from anyone else. There is nothing specially original about this story or its development; but there are flashes of insight, brief descriptions, meditative paragraphs, passages of dialogue which reveal the singularity of Miss Jameson's vision. They run like a remarkable thread through what would otherwise, no doubt, be just a competent piece of story-telling; and have filled one reviewer at any rate with gratitude, admiration, and delight.

Tale of the Supernatural

THE SURVIVOR. By Dennis Parry. New York: Henry Holt. 1941. 318 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

MR. DENNIS PARRY has brought off, very brilliantly, one of those rare and difficult tales of the supernatural. If the list of these seems to remain ever small, it is largely because there are two hurdles, at least, to be leaped before success may be claimed: first, the writer must manage to beguile his reader into suspension of disbelief, and then, atop this, he must produce that final twist, the added pressure, what James called the turn of the screw.

Both of these Mr. Parry has achieved beyond doubt. The added turn of the screw ought not be revealed here, but the chief reason for the tale's success, the factor which breaks down any reader-resistance and sets the stage for all of its demoniacal doings, is the flaming vigor of Mr. Parry's chief character. Dr. James Marshall is as unbridled and uncompromisingly egotistical a man as ever stamped about the world. A medical genius, a harsh wit, a fierce, jealous hoarder of life, you can feel him, in his few pages of life, making fuel of all about him for his personal furnace. And you are not surprised that death cannot end him, and that he forces his way through the wall, a survivor. For the rest, the story will tell.

The end of the book does not seem entirely in scale with the atmosphere that has been building for three hundred pages; it needed something more transcendent, something greater in echo than Mr. Parry finally produced. But it was he who created that atmosphere, with its impossible demands. His talents in this field are plain. This is his first American book (preceded by two published in Canada), and we may expect to see more in the same vein.

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Bemelmansing

THE DONKEY INSIDE. By Ludwig Bemelmans. New York: The Viking Press. 1941. 224 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by LOUIS J. HALLE, JR.

THIS is Mr. Bemelmans's fourth book for adults, and perhaps it is time to get solemn about him. After reading the latest adventures of his soul, among the human masterpieces of Ecuador in this instance, this reviewer thinks enough evidence has at last accumulated to justify the public expression of a dire suspicion. This man in our midst, this Bemelmans, is not one of us at all. It is not clear just what his game is, but one would answer for it to the Dies Committee that he is, in fact, a fifth columnist—a fifth columnist from Mars. These observations, so strange and so fresh and so penetrating, are unquestionably Martian.

This theory disposes of a good deal of confusion. For it has long been evident to students and readers of the *New Yorker* that, on the one hand there is mundane English literature, and on the other—Bemelmans. He has appeared before us like a brilliant actor out of nowhere who wanders onto the stage in the midst of a set performance, having slipped by the stage-doorman, and proceeds to steal the show with a one-man performance of his own; the audience applauds, after the first minute, but continues to wonder, in a bewildered sort of way, whether this is a put-up job or whether the consternation behind the footlights is genuine.

In the present performance Bemelmans is, time and again, at his brilliant best. He goes to Ecuador (why Ecuador?), mingles in the illegitimate Old World society of Quito, crosses the Andes, enters the Amazon jungle aboard a mule, and journeys on to pay his respects to the Jivaro head-hunters. He leaves them relatively unscathed, returns to Quito, and finally to Guayaquil, where he boards the boat for home. But Ecuador as a whole is not left unscathed, and neither is the human race as a whole. To many of us, Ecuador will hereafter always be Bemelmans's Ecuador. And even the pleasant foibles of ourselves, right here in Norte America, will be more real to us for our having known, through the Bemelmans eyes, such notable characters as the Armenian Minister who went in for drunkenness with all the art of a great trapeze-artist performing on trapezes that are not there; or the Englishman who proudly displayed on the wall of his sitting-room a letter from The Athenæum requesting the return of a loan; or the house-boy of the Hotel Sucre in Otavalo, who left a newspaper at Bemelmans's door inscribed with the compliments of the "Gran Hotel," because that was the way it was done in the Gran Hotel in Guayaquil.

You can't put your finger on the secret of it, but the prospective reader should at least be warned in advance that, if Bemelmans makes the human race seem irresistibly endearing, like a collection of pet rabbits, he also makes it look more foolish than ever before.

Drawing by Ludwig Bemelmans from "The Donkey Inside."

New Yorkerettes

SHORT STORIES FROM THE NEW YORKER. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1940. 438 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THOSE of us who have been saying that much of the best short fiction now being written appears in *The New Yorker* can now find ample evidence for our claim in this collection of sixty-eight stories which that magazine has published in the fifteen years of its existence. The anonymous editors tell us that they have confined themselves to fiction, leaving out family reminiscences, parables, fantasies, parodies, and the like, and also, with a few exceptions, stories from series; though they have included one of Leonard Ross's sketches of Hyman Kaplan, one of Richard Lockridge's dialogues between Mr. and Mrs. North (not, in this reviewer's opinion, one of the best ones); and one of Arthur Kober's genre pictures of life in the Bronx. In addition, there are too many contributions, too many contributors even, to list, though they would make up a galaxy of distinguished names.

Taking quick dips almost at random, to stir your memory of old issues and to show you the sort of old friends you may meet, there is Thurber's sympathetic picture of the escapist who is an artist in everything except producing art, "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty." There is Irwin Shaw's too-famous "Sailor off the Bremen," and also his "The Girls in Their Summer Dresses," which has always seemed much superior to that brutal bit of wish-fulfilment. There is E. B. White's "The Door," that study in the neurosis of our time. There is John O'Hara's "Over the River and through the Wood," where, as sometimes in Maupassant, you think that tragedy begins with the first sentence; but it doesn't; it begins with the last, opening an abyss beneath you as you step off the concluding words. And there are Dorothy Parker, Thomas Wolfe, Sherwood Anderson, Erskine Caldwell, and a dozen other equally well-known names.

Where the editors have done so well, it seems cavilling to make any objection; and yet it must be said that any one who brings together a volume of stories by half a hundred authors without providing any alphabetic index, deserves the curses, as well as the blessings, of generations of readers. If you remember any old favorite, you will in all probability find it here (allowing for the fact that you may disagree on the best representative of a group like Kober's); but you will have a hard time finding it again, when you want to show it to a friend. But all in all, here is a panorama of our time, gay and grim, happy as Mr. and Mrs. North, tormented as Robert Coates's child-murderer, ridiculous as James Reid Parker's academic stuffed shirts, heroic as Dorothy Parker's Spanish soldiers, our time as seen by scores of singularly sensitive, witty, and wise observers.

It is to be hoped that the dignity of cloth covers will show the real importance of much of this writing, which has been too much overlooked because it has appeared in a magazine with humorous illustrations. That old *Punch* artist and writer, Thackeray, complained that people applaud the clown, but "their hearts are with that melancholy fellow Hamlet, with the big cloak and the black plumes."

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BOOKS IN THE ARSENAL OF DEMOCRACY

THE most effective British propaganda in this war has been the bravery of the civilian population under murderous assault. Likewise, the most persuasive British writing we have seen has not been intended as propaganda at all, yet sets forth irresistibly some of the qualities in the British people which we Americans believe must be preserved. Many readers here already know *The Countryman** that quarterly of English rural experience in which the sanity and wholesomeness of the best English character, love of the soil and of a good life, make the reader feel that war is only the worst remedy for the decadence of a civilization.

War is widespread over England, but the English tradition (which is so often our American tradition) and the island quality of the English carry on. In recent numbers of *The Countryman,* the editor, J. W. Robertson Scott, whose motto is chosen from "Ecclesiastes," "The earth is for all," has been asking his subscribers what props their minds in these bad days. He does not ask them how they avoid the war, for all of them are in it, and some of them are leaders in either politics, industry, organization, or military service. He asks them where they draw sustenance for the spirit, while they carry on. The answers are in extraordinary contrast to the diet of hate and ambition and domination over others urged upon the German people by their propagandists and political leaders. It is not the German people that is condemned by this contrast. It is the poison in this sick philosophy which substitutes for all the virtues of both Christian and non-Christian ethics a gospel of success by violence, and the conceit of the master who has made a free man into a slave.

Do not smile at the naiveté of these generals, admirals, novelists, farmers, scientists, relief workers, governors, and ex-governors, who, to make life worth living under stress, turn to gardening, or nature, or reading—most of all to reading. It is not naiveté, nor are they naive. A farmer writes: "1. Doing something unmistakably useful. . . .; 2. Recognition of the truth about the present . . .; 3. Considering what may be done in the future . . .; 4. Seeing humanity from afar both in space and time . . .; 5. Contemplating people who have been heroic alone or in small groups . . .; 6. Music . . .; 7. Rest and recreation." And he names, among books, where books help in these categories, those written by such diverse minds as Shaw, T. S. Eliot, Albert Schweitzer, Dorothy Sayers, and adds histories, geologies, astronomies, travels, the *Reader's Digest,* and the music of the great Germany. Another subscriber broods over the atlas "marking how destruction marches along the valleys of history," and how "in the life of St. Patrick, one seems to hear the ring of the axe on the woodland as a new civilization was being laid in the rural places, after the fall of marble cities. The mind of man must be rebuilt as well as his habitation." A woman writes, "I continue watching the trees grow and horses being fed and the clouds going across the sky. . . . I like to listen to the way people talk, and have been pleased to hear how kind they are and with so little ill feeling toward our so-called enemies. . . . I think I enjoy simple things even more than usual (feeling they may depart at any moment)."

Among the subscribers who have sought props for their minds in the "rather solid things" that survive wars and pestilences, are the American Ambassador, C. R. Attlee, M.P., H. E. Bates, R. A. Butler, M.P., Dame Elizabeth Cadbury, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Charnwood, St. John Ervine, Lord Harmsworth, L. Hore-Belisha, John Masefield, A. A. Milne, the Duke of Montrose, H. W. Nevinson, J. B. Priestley, Bernard Shaw, the late Lord Tweedsmuir, and H. G. Wells. It needs no close knowledge of Great Britain to understand what a cross-section of the national life such a list represents.

The Saturday Review has been criticized by some, and praised by others, for carrying its editorials, its essays, and its reviews into the field of politics, ideology, and the world emergency. It has been criticized, and praised, for continuing to discuss extensively literature, its history, its criticism. The first is as inevitable as it is certainly right in a time when every energy of the intellect and the imagination must be concerned with the "bad eminence" of evil, anarchy, violence, and the conflict of ways of life throughout the planet. The second, it seems to us, is a prime duty of a magazine that believes, first of all, in the "rather solid things" that make the soil in which the will to live a good life (and fight for it, if necessary) must grow.

There has been a good deal of idle talk in the newspapers of the drift of our recreations, intellectual and otherwise, toward "escape" from the unhappy reality of the present. Substitute "change" for the inaccurate word "escape" and you will get a truer idea of what is happening and should happen in a time of distress, or over-strain, and of intensity. If these English readers "change" their minds between bombings with P. G. Wodehouse, Agatha Christie, and Gilbert White's "Natural History of Selborne," may it do them good! They will change back to danger and effort fast enough, and be the better for the "recollection of . . . care-free years." And if all of us, bombed or not bombed, but certainly already on the firing line of "all we have and are," make a practice of escaping (if you choose to call it that) to the wisdom, the beauty, the courage, the good sense, the fortitude, the unsparing truth, and hope in the best that has been thought and said before us, we shall be strengthening and supplying the fibres of the mind. Good books are part of the arsenal of democracy. H. S. C.

THE COUNTRYMAN. A Quarterly Non-Party Review and Miscellany of Rural Life and Work for the English-speaking World. Idbury, near Kingham, in Oxfordshire. 10 shillings anywhere.

Revenant

By Christine Turner Curtis

HE shall give her leave to roam
In the lanes of dogwood bloom
On her way home.

Faint, her narrow feet shall fall
As a furry animal
On the oak-ball.

He shall give her leave to pass
Like the sunlight, without loss,
Through window-glass.

Clearly shall her presence pour
Draughts of laughter and allure;
Just as before.

He shall give her leave at last
Springs to loose within a breast
Parched with the past.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

"N., L., & D."

SIR:—Although the time for doing so many have passed, I cannot refrain from adding a cheer to the voices of those who have praised Louis J. Halle's "Nihilism, Literature, and Democracy," [*SRL*, Dec. 14].

In the January 4th issue Louis Davies criticizes Mr. Halle's thesis on the grounds that the petty and evil are very much with us today and that it is questionable whether men have souls. Apparently Miss Davies has been affected by the very psychological attitude Mr. Halle deplores, for her criticism begs the question. Without attempting to define the soul of man, I should like to point out once more what Mr. Halle has already said so effectively—that the non-existence of souls and the predominance of evils both petty and gigantic are so taken for granted by most literate persons that to question these fundamental axioms is looked upon as sentimentalism or ignorance. As Mr. Halle points out, evil and sordidness were actually no less prevalent in Conrad's time, or in any other time, than they are in ours; the point is that a great deal of our trouble lies in our psychological attitudes—I hesitate to say in our souls. These attitudes have been conditioned by our reading.

Consider, for example, Ernest Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls." This is, so far as I can discover from a fascinated reading of it, a great novel; it is full of potent drama, chilling emotion, vibrant description, embedded in brilliant prose; it has the impact of a high-explosive bomb. Of course, young people as well as adults, by the hundreds of thousands, are thrilled and impressed by it. Its unspoken implications seem to be, however, that Robert Jordan is merely a sensitive, courageous, admirable animal. For what cause is he giving his life—the same cause for which Pablo committed his indiscriminate murders? What is the meaning of his love for Maria, which is so movingly described? Love and war seem to be ends in themselves, worth while for the thrills which they provide before the inevitable and unrelieved blackout. Shakespeare is no literary brother to Lloyd Douglas, and yet if Hamlet's tragedy is greater than Robert Jordan's it is precisely because his psyche (shall we say) is of greater stature.

Or consider Mr. Hemingway's "The Fifth Column." Philip Rawlings is decidedly a sympathetic character, and yet he, like Robert Jordan, is merely a biological accident. Compare him with Dr. Kaarlo Valkonen, the idealist in Robert E. Sherwood's "There Shall Be No Night." Dr. Valkonen is defeated by evil forces too great for him to battle, but the reader knows that such men can never truly die. Because he embodies the spirit of man—or whatever it is that distinguishes men from apes—his tragedy is greater than Rawlings', and Sherwood's play is greater than Hemingway's.

It seems to me that "prophetic genius" can play a more important role in our times—a role which may yet awaken the latent idealism of our people in time to combat forces which are as portentously evil as any the world has seen. If there are no prophets, we had better pray for a pillar of fire and cloud to lead us through the wasteland which will have been America.

HARRISON L. REINKE.

Eaglebrook School,
Deerfield, Mass.

"Here's your book back. My husband says it is the best bathtub reading ever!"

After 138 Years

SIR:—The timeliness of the following Wordsworth sonnet, written, I believe, in October of 1803, should make it worth reprinting:

England! the time is come when thou shouldst wean
Thy heart from its emasculating food;
The truth should now be better understood;
Old things have been unsettled; we have seen
Fair seed-time, better harvest might have been
But for thy trespasses; and, at this day,
If for Greece, Egypt, India, Africa,
Aught good were destined, thou wouldst step between.
England! all nations in this charge agree:
But worse, more ignorant in love and hate,
Far—far more abject, is thine Enemy:
Therefore the wise pray for thee, though the freight
Of thy offenses be a heavy weight:
Oh grief that Earth's best hopes rest all with Thee!

This sonnet, untitled, is to be found on pp. 328-329 of the "Selected Poems of William Wordsworth" in the Oxford World's Classics series. The entire section of which it forms part is called "Poems Dedicated to National Independence and Liberty."

ANTHONY BOUCHER.

Los Angeles, California

Information, Please

SIR:—If any of your readers can supply me with newspaper clippings, photographs, letters, documents, personal reminiscences, anecdotes, or any other material concerning General J. E. B. Stuart, Confederate Cavalryman of the Civil War, I would deeply appreciate it. Such material received by me will be photostated and returned at once. Credit will be given for material that is used.

RAYMOND BEARSE.

27 Carver Street,
Brandon, Vermont.

[NOTE: *The tally of coupons sent in by readers on the Senator-at-large proposal showed seven in favor to every vote opposed.*]

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Custom and Belief

ENGLISH FOLKLORE. By Christina Hole. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940 184 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD ALDINGTON

THE official definition of folklore is roughly: "The culture of the backward sections of civilized nations." But that fails to suggest the vast extent and complexity of the superstitions, rituals, customs, beliefs, and symbolism; nor does it take into account the fact that "folklore" influences people who would be extremely indignant if called "backward." A case in point is the common belief that it is "unlucky" to start some enterprise on a Friday, particularly if it is the thirteenth of the month. The belief in lucky and unlucky days is of great antiquity, going back to the earliest epochs of Egypt, and very widespread. Before Christianity made sex disreputable, Friday was a lucky day because it belonged to the goddess of Love (Vendredi, Venerdi); thirteen became unlucky because of its association with the Last Supper. This is a good example of the persistence and modification of a very ancient superstition, for which there is no rational ground whatsoever. That it is not confined to "backward sections" was demonstrated recently when the mayor of New York refused to open a new flying field on a Friday. We all know educated people who are superstitious about touching wood, black cats, palmistry, astrology, spilling salt, seeing the new moon through glass, and the like.

In her "English Folklore" Miss Hole has brought together a vast amount of miscellaneous information about beliefs and customs which existed in the past, and in many cases still linger on, in England. It is no more possible to give a summary of this often fascinating material than it would be to summarize "The Golden Bough." But some idea of the scope and nature of the book may be given the reader by the chapter headings: Birth and Childhood, Courtship and Marriage, House and Home, The Day's Work, Death and Burial, Sun, Moon and Stars, Birds and Beasts, Trees and Plants, Water Wells and Stones, Witches and Witchcraft, The Fairy Kingdom, Giants and Heroes, Strange Visitors, Safeguards and Seekings.

In all these varied aspects of life and nature, we find that mingling of the natural and the supernatural which is the essence of folklore. The English are a practical, matter of fact people; and their folklore is far less vivid and extensive than that of the Celtic peoples in the British Isles; but I think the reader may well be surprised to find how much there was, and how much still exists in remote places. "As recently as 1924 a Devon man was prosecuted for scratching a woman's arm; his defence was that she had bewitched him and he wished to draw blood above the breath and so free himself." I can confirm from personal experience Miss Hole's statement that some country people will not allow white hawthorn blossom to be brought into the house; they don't know the reason, but in the past it was connected with the fairies. And it is a little startling to learn that Herne the Hunter and his spectral oak were "seen" in Windsor Forest as recently as 1931. The May-day celebrations, so bitterly persecuted by the Puritans, (Stubbs called the maypole a "stinking idol") were still spontaneously carried on by children in Warwickshire in my boyhood.

There is a good deal of folklore embedded in English literature. It is found, for instance, in Shakespeare's fairies and Puck, and in Milton's lubber fiend. In the seventeenth century Bishop Corbet in his famous "Farewell, rewards and fairies," says that fairies went out with the monks; whereas Chaucer three centuries earlier says the monks drove them out. Scott was among the first to make conscious use of folklore, of which he had enormous knowledge; but there is a considerable amount in Thomas Hardy. Unfortunately, the more picturesque customs and beliefs are the first to go, and the foolish or ugly ones linger on. The plan of Miss Hole's book does not allow her to touch on folklore in literature, but her book is an able popular presentation of material often known only to experts, and may be warmly recommended as a light introduction to the subject.

(From "English Folklore")
Weakminds, scared by superstitions.

Eliot and Chapman

GEORGE ELIOT AND JOHN CHAPMAN. By Gordon S. Haight. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1940. 261 *pp., with index.* $2.75.

Reviewed by R. ELLIS ROBERTS

IN his diary for September 26, 1851, when he was thirty years old, John Chapman wrote "It seems to me that in proximity with women a man cannot command his own peace!" Five months earlier he had penned this grave generalization:

> It is in the order of nature that women should lean on men, but men have none to lean upon, and hence the necessity preëminently in them of SELF-culture and by a closer relation to nature to so nourish and strengthen themselves by striking deep and extended roots in the spirit-world that they may stand strong alone.

Unfortunately "nature" for John Chapman always included at least two women, his wife Susanna and some younger favorite to whom he, doubtless, explained woman's dependence on man when he was not lamenting her deplorable capacity to interrupt his peace. He would also, at times, assist the favorite of the moment to find contacts in the "spirit-world" by a little light reading aloud before breakfast, say, from Mackay's "Progress of the Intellect."

John Chapman, bookseller, publisher, editor, physician, quack, philosopher, humbug, and reformer would scarcely be remembered today, except in dusty libraries, were it not that for a few years an awkward, shy, passionate woman, Mary Ann Evans, lived in his strange household at 142 The Strand, next to Somerset House, and for a year or two listened not only to his philosophy but to his philandering. That the man had great talents is indisputable. He was in the forefront of the liberal mid-Victorian movement: he knew Mill, Martineau, Francis Newman, Carlyle, Huxley, Lewes, Frederic Harrison, Browning, Thackeray, and Froude. Distinguished Americans stayed in his house. He was infinitely ingenious in securing credit to run *The Westminster Review,* the leading organ of the rebels: and, if he failed his backers, he paid his authors handsomely. It called for powers of a rare kind that this serious, rather pompous adherent of the advanced liberal party should have been able to retain his position and gain no little respect while he flouted Victorian morality by his flagrant *ménage à trois:* not that he was particular whether the arrangement should be of three or more. Mary Ann Evans,

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Photo by Sophus Williams (From the collection of Mrs. R. B. Winser)

George Eliot

who became George Eliot only after her flight with Lewes, to whom Chapman introduced her, was certainly attracted by her plausible patron: but even her libertarian theories were disturbed, I fancy, when she realized that, did she yield to his desires, she would have to share her lover with his wife, Susanna, and with his favorite, Elizabeth Tilley, who united in detesting the threatened intruder. There is no evidence that George Eliot was ever Chapman's mistress; and the legend would probably never have grown had it not been for Mr. Cross's discreet suppression of the whole incident in his official biography.

Dr. Haight has done a splendid piece of work. Here we have not only the text of Chapman's diaries for 1851 and 1860 (the only available years); but an admirable biographical essay in which there is enough material about Chapman and his circle to make this book indispensable for all students of the time, for all biographers of George Eliot. I do not know any book which throws so much light on the muddle, the fineness and the pettiness, the genuine liberalism, and the incredible bigotry of progressive Victorianism as this monograph of Dr. Haight's and Dr. Edward Everett's "The Party of Humanity."

What strikes a modern reader most violently is, I suppose, the occasional superstitious childishness of these advanced thinkers, their portentous solemnity, and their amazing failure to comprehend ordinary human feelings.

It is an entrancing picture—Dr. Chapman seriously enjoying a serious exposition of the serious problem of sanitation, and forgetting the tyranny of the rascally House of Lords.

R. Ellis Roberts was formerly editor of "Life and Letters."

World of Diplomats

RIVAL AMBASSADORS AT THE COURT OF QUEEN MARY. By E. Harris Harbison. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1940. 380 *pp., with index.* $4.

Reviewed by CRANE BRINTON

WE are so used to the greatness of the British Empire — a greatness enhanced rather than diminished by the perils it is now facing—that we are likely to forget that only a few centuries ago there was no British Empire, and not even a Great Britain. It would be misleading, and a trifle scandalous to modern notions, to suggest that the weak and divided little England of the 1550's which forms the subject of Professor Harbison's admirable study in diplomatic history occupied a position somewhat analogous to that of contemporary Rumania. Perhaps contemporary Holland would be a less offensive analogy, though like most such historical analogies, by no means a perfect one. At any rate, the England of Mary the Catholic was a small country, known through Europe for the restlessness and political instability of its inhabitants, and at the moment torn by religious strife between Protestant and Catholic. Rivalry for European greatness lay between France and Spain, or better, between the houses of Valois and Hapsburg. In this rivalry England was a stake of some importance.

Professor Harbison has set himself the task of telling how England, technically neutral at the accession of Mary in 1553 was by 1557 drawn into war against France, a brief, unhappy, and unpopular war in which the English lost Calais, their last foothold on French soil. He centers his story about the intrigues of the ambassadors of the rival states to the court of Queen Mary, Antoine de Noailles and his brother François for France, Simon Renard for Spain. It is a story that has been told before, in general histories like those of Froude and Pollard, and in many monographs and articles. But Professor Harbison is no mere epigone. He has uncovered new manuscript materials, particularly on the Noailles, he has mastered the abundant materials in printed sources, digested the work of his predecessors, and produced a clear, intelligent, and most readable account which promises to remain for a long time the best history of the "Spanish marriage" of Mary the Catholic and its immediate consequences. This is a most encouraging book, for it shows that an American scholar, rigorously trained in the professional discipline of history, and possessing the much-attacked Ph.D., can maintain the standards of his profession, and yet write a monograph which, if not "popular" in the simpler senses of the word, is yet unmistakably a part of history as literature.

It is not a weakness, but a strength, in Professor Harbison's book that he has kept on the whole within the traditions of diplomatic and narrative history. We go too far with such obvious truths as the assertion that each generation rewrites history for itself when we declare that such fashions as "economic" or "social" history have invalidated the kind of history Professor Harbison has written, have made it old-fashioned, incomplete, misleading. There will, one hopes, always be a place for such history, even if sociology one day becomes a respectable science. Certainly Professor Harbison has no reason to weaken momentarily, and make such a concession to the spirit of our age as when he writes: "Sixteenth-century diplomats lived in a world of dispatches and audiences, of paper treaties and hypocritical altercations, of subtle plot and counterplot to vindicate things called personal honor and dynastic prestige—a world which often had only the most tenuous connection with the real world of expanding commerce and industry, of ordinary social relationships, of religious and spiritual aspirations, of scientific and intellectual achievement." On the contrary, the world of the diplomats was—and is—a part of any "real" world, and its history at least as important as the history of prices, or refrigeration, or metaphysics.

Queen Mary

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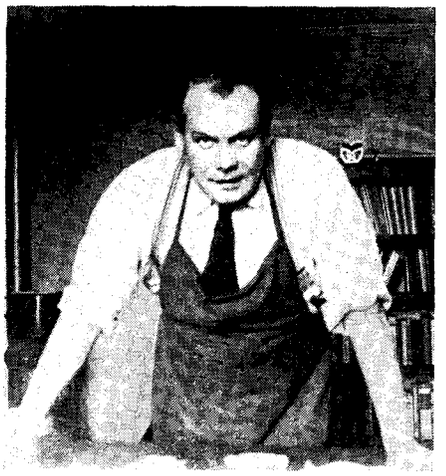
The Family Graf

THE LIFE OF MY MOTHER. By Oskar Maria Graf. New York: Howell, Soskin & Co. 1940. 583 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THIS book is more comprehensive than its title, for in it Oskar Maria Graf tells not only the story of his mother's life but also the stories of her family and his father's family, of his brothers and sisters and himself. And for good measure he briefly outlines several chapters of German history, from the time when Ludwig II was madly bankrupting Bavaria down to the year in which Adolf Hitler was named chancellor by the failing Hindenburg. The record is so extremely personal, it admits us unashamedly to so many family intimacies, that it often makes the reader feel like an intruder. The blood and bone and heart of its author have gone into it so fully and so obviously that it makes criticism seem boorish and inappropriate. But, whatever else may be said of "The Life of My Mother," this may be said with absolute confidence: few biographies or autobiographies have ever been as candid. One needs no affidavits or notarial stamps to be sure of that. Every page and paragraph and line rings true. There is no dodging, no prettifying, no apologizing, no rationalization.

The Grafs and the Heimraths lived in the Berg district of southern Bavaria. The first family was descended from persecuted Waldensians who did not find refuge in Bavaria until the early part of the eighteenth century; the second had lived for hundreds of years on a lonely farm in Aufhausen. The two were united when Max Graf married Tessa Heimrath. It was a union of hostile strains—hostile in religion and tradition. The Heimraths were devout and superstitious Catholics, the Grafs had followed Luther and Calvin and Zwingli. But, more than that, Max had behind him a tradition of trade and craftsmanship, while Tessa was a peasant who could conceive of nothing better than remaining a peasant. Their life together was stormy on his side, patient on hers. She bore him eleven children. He prospered as the baker of Berg, but she survived as an intact personality; she and her philosophy outlived him. When her children had scattered far from the family bakery, when personal tragedies and national tragedy were a double sorrow; through war and collapse and revolution, inflation and reconstruction and a new collapse; even under the shadow of National Socialism, she still stood like a strong tree, her roots deep in the soil. For her son Oskar she became



Oskar Maria Graf makes us respect what he has done.

at last a symbol, the symbol of that "human instinct for self-preservation" that "is tough and ineradicable. Its patient, long-suffering force seems to keep pace with any historical change, and finally to outlast it."

He has made her live on the printed page, in her simplicity and integrity. He has put all the less simple Grafs and Heimraths into vital words, and has found words for himself that are revealing and unsparing. He has carefully drawn in the background of peasant and village life by the Starnberger See. But he has done all this with no sense of proportion, with no brilliance or engaging cleverness, with little power in individual scenes, and at a length that will weary many readers. It is likely to weary them, indeed, before they are half-way on their journey, for during the first few hundred pages his book jolts along like a clumsy farm wagon on a road that is scenically monotonous. He elaborates dull incidents, while scamping others potentially more interesting. He scores, finally, by persistence and cumulative effort. He makes us respect what he has done, and makes sure that we shall not forget what he has done, even though he has not much pleased or moved us along the way. The English of the anonymous translator is mediocre and often flat. But "The Story of My Mother," like Tessa herself, has undeniable qualities of survival.

Occasionally a publisher's note is worth quoting. Here is one for readers not already familiar with its facts.

> When Hitler seized power in 1933, he [Graf] voluntarily went into exile in Austria. Anxious to exploit the popularity of his writings with the German people, Dr. Goebbels asked him to become the official novelist of the Nazi regime. Oskar Maria Graf replied from Vienna with his now famous protest: "What have I done to deserve this disgrace? Burn my books! I would consider it an undying mark of shame if my books were not burned by you."

The Brownings

AS A FLAME SPRINGS. The Romance of Robert and Elizabeth Barrett Browning. By James Patton McCormick. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940. 356 *pp., with index.* $2.75.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

A MARK of the superior writer is that his work is likely to be all of a piece. Whatever errors he makes, his tone remains constant. He generally aims, or tries to aim, at a specific public.

Of late there has sprung up a race of biographers ready and anxious to solicit several publics at once. These writers give us shreds and patches of fiction, psychology, and purple phrasing, together with cold laboratory data—a kind of "processed" writing designed, one must assume, to appeal to a variety of tastes but likely to be thoroughly satisfactory to none of them.

Mr. McCormick's "As a Flame Springs" is a case in point. He has read enough and traveled enough to assemble a great deal of useful material (some of it new) on the Brownings. He tells of their courtship and marriage; their daily life in Florence, Paris, or wherenot; their literary production; their reactions to various topics such as Italian politics, spiritualism, and child-training. Interesting sections treat of Browning's associations with the Pre-Raphaelites and the critical reception accorded his various publications.

The materials are here for a scholarly biographical study, but Mr. McCormick is not content to write such a book. No, he must use a poetical title, designate his work as a "romance," and search for engaging chapter-heads. He must trick out his materials with literary flounces which blur his scholarship without creating the artistic effect he apparently hoped for. At times he writes in a heavily-scented, semi-poetic style, and at times he lapses into an idiom no more poetic than a Bunsen burner. In too many places he sins grievously against syntax, grammar, and diction. When he works from fact to fact, he is generally competent, but when he essays to make that flight over facts which alone can give imaginative validity to a work, the results are distinctly unsuccessful. Doubtless such a flight would be possible, but Mr. McCormick apparently was not ready to make it.

One hopes that in his next book he will stick to a single objective within his range.

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Britain . . .

REPORT ON ENGLAND. By Ralph Ingersoll. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1940. 202 *pp.* $1.50.

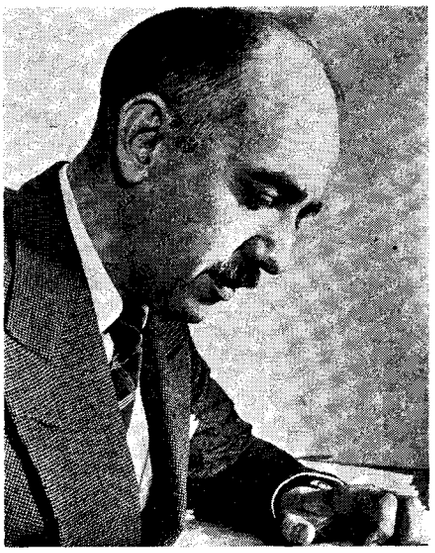
Reviewed by FREDERICK LAWRENCE

MR. RALPH INGERSOLL'S "Report on England" is an arousing book which for a variety of reasons appealed to me as an ex-foreign correspondent and "old newspaperman."

Mr. Ingersoll went to England, saw it for two weeks, came home and in another three weeks had his book ready. It's nothing new that the book-form "story of the crime" should be on the stands while the body is still warm, so to speak. It is new, and something of a feat of journalism, that the "story" so produced should be a workmanlike job.

The "report" demolishes some old concepts of newspaper writing and reporting that I have long felt to be much in need of demolition. It gives us observation in various dimensions: sharp observations, human observation, imaginative observation, precise observation, technical observation. Perhaps I ought to place the last first. "Artist-writers," as the French would put it, have already given us the other kinds, although there has been a great lag in applying them to American journalism. But the technical observation I found in this book deeply impressed upon me the necessity of technical knowledge for the suitable reporting of the happenings of this technical age. I believe that Mr. Ingersoll's adequate report on all sorts of technical questions which people are asking about the war in England, such as what the difference might be between a Spitfire and a Hurricane fighter plane, or what can you tell us about bombers, or barrage balloons or land mines, or about mastery of the air, is the most outstanding achievement of his book. For this and other reasons I feel it would be a useful handbook for anyone wishing to understand the war news as it comes out of England.

Another characteristic of the book is its attitude toward so-called objective reporting. One can never convey the images and the feelings of facts without imagining them sharply and himself having feelings about them. Also, reporting is conditioned to the reporter's concepts of the meanings and the values of things. All this poses for large debate a question of relativity in reporting. I believe that Mr. Ingersoll's reporting is predominantly subjective. It is alert, alive with curiosity, inquisitive, untiringly aggressive in laying hands on that most



Ralph Ingersoll

elusive of all things, a fact, and in getting at the meaning of it.

A third characteristic of the book is its writing. I like what Mr. Ingersoll has done in this respect because it coincides with convictions I long have held on the same subject. Most front-page stories are togged out in language, such as no sane man would dream of using in describing events to a friend. On top of this, the report must be contorted and twisted into a "story," or else, the supposition goes, it isn't news. I have long felt that some of the most important news never sees the light of day in American newspapers for one of two reasons, *i. e.*: either it isn't a "story," or it didn't happen "today." The accepted formula on news does not admit that old news still untold may be bigger news than today's news. For instance: What newspaper has yet told the tale of the most staggering raid known to aerial warfare: the demolition of Rotterdam and the killing of 30,000 persons within a few minutes? Because the Nazi censors prevented the news from getting out, and because it wasn't "today's" news when the Dutch legation at Washington finally issued a statement of the facts, the American press treated it briefly as a routine condensation of a "handout." And so this great story has not yet been told and the press wastes streamer lines on a bombing of no significance.

I mention these things because I think they illustrate what I mean when I speak of Mr. Ingersoll's revised conception of the technique of reporting. Mr. Ingersoll uses a good deal of the "I," and I believe that is a good thing insofar as it gets away from a false reportorial modesty.

Frederick Lawrence is the pseudonym of an American foreign correspondent who served in London.

Holland . . .

JUGGERNAUT OVER HOLLAND. By E. N. van Kleefens. New York: Columbia University Press. 1941. 195 *pp., with index.* $2.

Reviewed by LAWRENCE FERNSWORTH

THE author of this book was the Dutch Foreign Minister of the Netherlands at the time of the Nazi invasion which occurred on May 10, 1940. The book is his personal account of that invasion and of the events that preceded it. It is a document from which history must gather the makings of its own report for the future. It is drama of the very first order. It moves with the austere fatality of a Greek tragedy. A country, its Queen and its people fight with great courage against the Gods. But fight in vain. The Juggernaut moves over them, crushes them.

In August, 1938, Holland was Europe's "Peace Island." On the 31st of that month the Queen's birthday coincided with the fortieth anniversary of her reign. The celebrations of this and the following days "gave the outside world a picture of the nation united in the common love of its independence and its free institutions. . . . " But how quickly the scene begins to change. Another August comes. And war rumbles on the borders. The curtain has risen on the tragedy.

The Queen and her ministers work desperately to restore peace to others. They cannot, alas, salvage a scrap of peace for themselves. You should read what this great Queen did to bring peace to Europe, working quietly behind the scenes, without buildup or ballyhoo. Then you will perhaps agree with me that she deserves to be ranked as the greatest worker for peace this war has produced. Notwithstanding, Holland took every precaution, in a military way and otherwise, that it was possible for a small country to take, at the same time guarding her neutrality with scrupulous care.

In the last days of August, 1939, seven small peace-loving nations gathered at Brussels to make a last appeal for peace. When the Dutch delegation departed, "dense thunderclouds had settled like a pall over Brussels. Lightning streaked the skies in every direction."

The war gathers momentum. Germany solemnly promises to respect "the inviolability and integrity of the Netherlands." But proof comes that its master spies are already at work, the German legation the center of them. The winter passes. Spring has come. In the first days of May, 1940, the Juggernaut is ready to burst into Europe's Peace Island. Two days before the invasion, May 8, the Nazi

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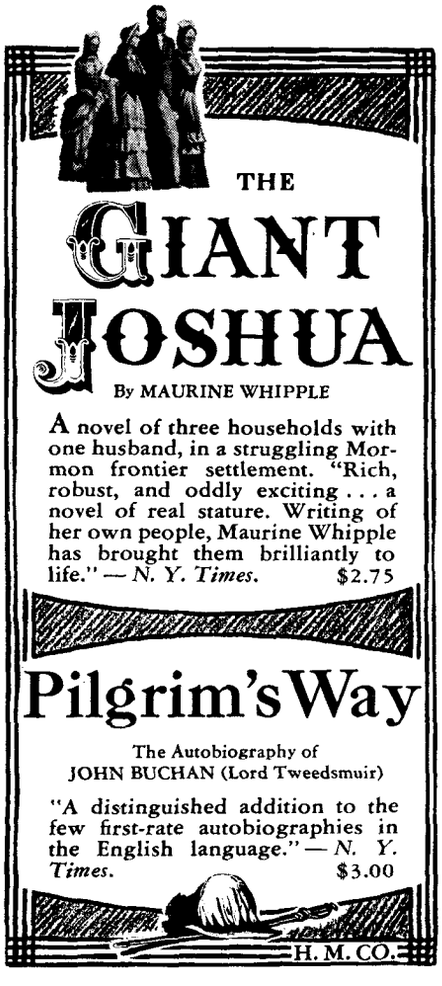
propaganda agency is diverting attention from Holland, accusing British and American press agencies of viciously questioning Germany's honorable intentions toward Holland. On the morning of May 10 comes "the bolt from the blue." The Juggernaut is rolling into Holland.

In the sequel, Mr. Van Kleffens clears up a number of points. He explains why and how the members of the government, members of the royal family, and finally the Queen, left Holland. This brave Queen left her country last of all—after repeated attempts had been made, not only upon her person, but upon her life. The Nazis tried not only to capture, but to exterminate the royal family. On a British destroyer the Queen finally sailed, not for England, but for a little corner of Holland, the Zeeland harbor of Breskens, where she felt she could remain with her people in safety. "But suddenly a disturbing message reached the warship." Breskens was being bombed. "The conclusion seems obvious: it was a trap . . . the destroyer's bell signals rang out. Heavily she heeled over, altering her course westward—to England." Date: May 13.

I don't see how anyone who thinks it worthwhile to have a clear picture of what happened in Holland can fail to read this book.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TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS ASSOCIATES

AS this issue goes to press, announcement is made of the death of James Joyce. The editors have asked us to say that the next issue will contain an evaluation of his work, in the form of an article or an editorial or both.

★ ★

☞Mr. Joseph Wharton Lippincott knows his three-year-olds. A month or two ago, he gave Young Q. a tip on a hunter, *Scotch Mist,* which bought a couple of pairs of shoes for baby. Last week, the Lippincott Company, of Philadelphia and New York, purchased the three-year-old publishing house of Carrick and Evans. After the merger is completed, one imprint will be used —that of the J. B. Lippincott Company. Lynn Carrick, much admired and respected by authors, literary agents, and the trade, will be a director and editor of the older firm. He will work in the New York office along with George Stevens, former editor of the *SRL.* Robert Evans is in active service with the Army, stationed at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey—a musket shot from the home of Judge Lynch, of the Criminal Record.

★ ★

☞Believe it or not, "Believe It Or Not," by Robert Ripley, sells—after ten years—ten thousand copies a year. Simon and Schuster now have thirty-five older books which sell 4,000 copies or more a year. ☞*Time* carried a good head on its story about the sell-out in America of John Donne's works —"Hemingway made him a best-seller."

★ ★

☞The swap recently made by Doubleday, Doran and Company and the Frederick A. Stokes Company of early Van Wyck Mason novels, from Doubleday, for early Edna Ferber stories, reminds us of one of the most unusual deals in publishing. J. Henry Harper tells the story in *The House of Harper*: "During a dinner I attended with Henry Holt, the conversation turned on the respective merits of William E. Norris and Thomas Hardy, and Holt expressed the opinion that Norris was the coming man. I stood out for Hardy; and Holt turned to me and generously offered to exchange authors—he having published for Hardy, and we for Norris. I accepted his proposition; and from that time on we have published all of Hardy's novels, and Henry Holt and Company have had the first claim on any work by Norris." ☞The book business should go in for these baseball deals more frequently. Who'll trade a Party-line novelist for a slightly-used poet?

★ ★

☞When the Publishers' Ad Club makes its annual advertising award, we hope it will consider Farrar and Rinehart's superb copy in *Publishers' Weekly* for *Delilah.* ☞In the January 11th *Nation* Clip Boutell, of Putnam's, has a good-natured piece on The Lone Ranger, "Hi-Yo, Silver-Lining!" Mr. Boutell describes this incredible radio program as "horse-opera with overtones of 'Pilgrim's Progress.'" A recent Lone Ranger give-away, by a bakery, brought over a million responses, with retailers' trucks jamming the streets to pick up bread. Ostensibly a young people's program, surveys show that 63 per cent of the audience are adults. We object only to Boutell's choice of comparatives: "The program has sold merchandise ranging from lollipops to pencils." During his years with *The Saturday Review,* he was almost never without an Eberhard No. 3 in his mouth.

★ ★

☞Commenting on the interesting sidelights of research, Forrest Wilson, author of the forthcoming biography of Harriet Beecher Stowe, "Crusader in Crinoline," (Lippincott) says: "In going over the trail of a famous person one bumps into a great many local legends which are untrue. In Cincinnati many people are so sure that Harriet Beecher Stowe lived in a house at the corner of McMillan Avenue and Foraker Street and wrote 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' there, that there is a movement to buy the house and turn it into a museum. Actually, the house belonged to Mrs. Stowe's father, Lyman Beecher, and 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' was written in Brunswick, Maine."

★ ★

☞Bernard Smith will soon complete his new book, "The Democratic Spirit," an anthology of American writings from the seventeenth century to the present day. Alfred A. Knopf will publish it in the early fall. The volume is planned to be a treasury of the great essays, poems, sketches, orations, and stories inspired by the American ideal of democracy. ☞The Heritage Press reports the balloting which they have done to determine the ten greatest classics of American literature. Fifty of the leading critics were consulted, each being asked to name which ten books he or she considers to be the greatest. Forty-two ballots

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were returned. So many of the critics grouped *Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer* as one work, The Heritage Press decided to consider it as such. As a result, these combined novels by Mark Twain lead the list with 38 votes. "Moby Dick" ranks second, with 33 votes; "Leaves of Grass" third, with 31 votes. Then comes "The Essays of Ralph Waldo Emerson," with 24 votes; "Walden," with 21 votes; "The Scarlet Letter," with 20 votes; "The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin," with 19 votes; "The Tales of Edgar Allan Poe," with 19 votes; "The Prose Writings of Abraham Lincoln," with 16 votes; and "The Education of Henry Adams," with 14 votes. ☞The only titles which approached the leaders are "The Last of the Mohicans" and "The Poems of Emily Dickinson," each with 9 votes; and "The Rise of Silas Lapham," with 7 votes. Seven titles had 4 votes each. These were: "The House of Seven Gables," "Little Women," "Life on the Mississippi," "The Oregon Trail," "Sister Carrie," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and "The Red Badge of Courage."

★ ★

☞James Truslow Adams has accepted the position of Editor-in-Chief of a forthcoming volume of first importance—an Atlas of American History. The Atlas will do for our historical geography what the "Dictionary of American History" has done for the facts of our history—enable the user to find quickly and easily the hundreds of places, boundaries, routes, which have vanished from our present-day maps, or which were never marked on any map. The Atlas will be a co-operative work under the general direction of a board composed of authorities on both history and maps.

★ ★

☞G. P. Putnam's Sons has announced plans for a new series of books to be published in conjunction with *Current History & Forum* which will be known as "Current History Books." As the name implies, the titles will be books of history-in-the-making, dealing with current events and conditions throughout the world, selected for publication by the editorial staffs of *Current History* and the publishers. The first book in the series will be "Letters from Britain," edited by Diana Forbes-Robertson and Roger Straus, Jr.

★ ★

☞John Masefield has written an account of the campaign in Belgium. Dramatic title: "Twenty-Five Days." (Macmillan; early spring.) ☞In a recent *Trade Winds* we mentioned W. Somerset Maugham's remark that he is waiting for the mystery book in which the amateur detective will be shown up for what he really is—a heel. (The free adaptation from Maugham is the *SRL's*; brought on by a letter from a violent Chicago reader): "Isn't there a single dyed-in-the-gore mystery fan among you? *Why* don't you intimate to Mr. Maugham (more power to him in his own field) that he really should read Dashiell Hammett before speaking so dogmatically. Obviously, he hasn't read the 'Maltese Falcon' or he would *know* a dirty louse of a detective!"

★ ★

☞*We apologize to our subscribers for the late appearance of this issue owing to air raid damage in which we lost much valuable property and suffered great dislocation of our organization. But so long as we escape utter disaster, we shall continue our work.* The two foregoing sentences, when seen without quotation marks, bring home vividly the tragic circumstances under which English magazines are published. The italicized lines are from the November issue of *Art and Industry*, 66 Chandos Place, W.C.2., London. This issue contains a charming, illustrated survey of "Flower Reproduction" from the 18th century until today, by Rosemary Grimble, and, among other articles, a study of Alexey Brodovitch, the American (Saks-Fifth Avenue—Harper's Bazaar) artist and designer. *Art and Industry's* N. Y. address is: The Studio Ltd., 381 Fourth Ave.

Shall America take world leadership for democracy?

This question—which has become the subject of radio forums, of discussion by thinking people everywhere, of school and club debates—is raised and answered in a document of profound importance to all of us at this time.

17 INTELLECTUAL LEADERS SET FORTH THEIR COMMON PROGRAM FOR A NEW ERA OF WORLD FREEDOM

Now there is a plan for a new world—a goal toward which mankind can work. This inspiring declaration, with its four-point program for action, will stimulate and encourage every man and woman of good will. Its influence is already being widely felt. It embodies the joint beliefs of Herbert Agar, Frank Aydelotte, G. A. Borgese, Hermann Broch, Van Wyck Brooks, Ada L. Comstock, William Yandell Elliott, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Christian Gauss, Oscar Jászi, Alvin Johnson, Hans Kohn, Thomas Mann, Lewis Mumford, William Allan Neilson, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Gaetano Salvemini. "An excellent and unusually comprehensive basis for discussion of the shape of things to come."—POORE, *N. Y. Times*. $1.00

THE CITY OF MAN

A DECLARATION ON WORLD DEMOCRACY

"A brilliant and heart-lifting document . . . a definite workable proposal for ways and means to attack the problems that confront us . . . If democracy fails, it will not be because our wise men have forsaken us."—*Harpers*

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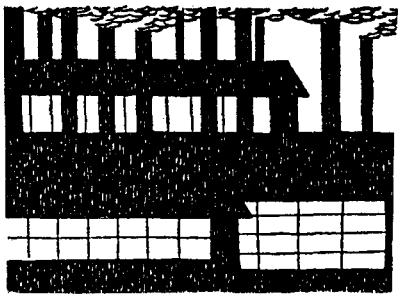
Two Tales of One City

A HISTORY OF CHICAGO: From Town to City, 1848—1871. Vol. II. By Bessie Louise Pierce. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 543 *pp., with index.* $5.

GEM OF THE PRAIRIES: An Informal History of the Chicago Underworld. By Herbert Asbury. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1940. 373 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by T. V. SMITH



PROFESSOR PIERCE bears Chicago witness once more upon the side of the angels. Here is the second volume of her monumental work upon this colossal city, colossal even if equivocal. Her first volume had dealt with years which, as she says, were "in every sense, elemental," the years from 1833 to 1848. This volume begins with the coming of the railroad and continues the story to 1871 when Chicago was more combustible than elemental. With nearly a third of a million inhabitants at the time of the great fire, Chicago was bustling as well as combustible. Slowly, methodically, cannily, as a historian must, Miss Pierce here patiently reconstructs from all available sources the trials, the growth, the triumph through the war and early reconstruction years of our second largest city.

I shall not outtalk my competence by speaking of this work as though I were a historian. I have read it with pleasure, I have marvelled at its scope and objectivity, and have celebrated as I read the wisdom of her relegating its tables (thirty-four pages of them and thirty-two of bibliography) to the appendix and leaving the text for material less technical and more interesting.

We have here no guide to city boosting, nor a narrative anecdotal in character. If history can be made scientific, it is here made so. Product of a vast coöperative research project focussed upon its own environment, this history perhaps not yet half done, is likely to share honor with its object, and in the event that is very great honor indeed.

But Chicago's history is not all honor, as Mr. Asbury's book makes clear. If Chicago is, as his title has it, "Gem of the Prairies," then there have ever been robbers after the "gem" and rats following in the train of the robbers. It is a colossal story of this monumental city which Mr. Asbury, fresh from writing "The French Quarter" and less fresh from writing "The Gangs of New York," tells in this volume. He begins with the beginning of dishonor in Chicago and traces the ebb and flow of iniquity up to its climax under contemporary "Big Shots," Torrio, Capone, O'Banion, and Hymie Weiss. For lack of space he skimps on the prohibition period.

But for a hundred years preceding prohibition Mr. Asbury does here unfold a tale of the bawdy and the brazen which causes one to wonder at the survival of the human race. Young girls in their teens serving in bordellos half a hundred men a day; society women and business men shearing the shepherdless for their own profit, corrupt politicians protecting the spoilators of every human virtue and the promoters of all cancerous social growths—this is the tale of that other Chicago which is here unfolded.

Some attention is given to efforts at reform, but the attention is dissipated by the reforms petering out. The author does give credit for Capone's riddance to the Chicago Crime Commission, of which he says that it "brought about more improvements in the administration of criminal justice than any other reform organization in the history of the city."

It is amazing how little the day-shift and the night-shift of this one city intersect in these two histories. Chicago's guardian angel and its dark demon struggle still for its soul through all of the expanses of its upper air. History, both reputable and otherwise, is still being made in Chicago while historians can what is already ripened by time.

T. V. Smith is Congressman-at-Large from Illinois.

Author, Author!

Ludwig Bemelmans ("Life Class," "The Donkey Inside") spent the holidays in Cuba. Mr. Bemelmans's waggish behavior is rapidly becoming legendary. Recently he wrote complaining of the necessity for reading galley proofs: "I am going to ask my carpenter to have a special couch built in which to read galley proofs, as you call them. To me they are a kind of noodle, animated by a special malevolent life. I am smothered by them. I feel like a mummy in bandelettes. Please have the next book printed on a roll." Mr. Bemelmans was an artist before he became a writer of juvenile and adult books. Once he astonished the editor of his children's books by insisting that one of them be printed in a format three feet square—because he likes to draw big pictures and dislikes having them reduced. This same editor first discovered Bemelmans when a friend took her to see the author-artist's apartment. Being homesick for his native Tyrol, Bemelmans had painted Austrian scenes on the window shades so that when he was feeling particularly sad he could pull them down and be immediately cheered up. Some of his most fantastic adventures took place when he opened a restaurant. "The Hapsburg," which he decorated with some of his most engaging pictures. The restaurant was a great success, but Bemelmans was finally bought out by his partners. It wasn't so much that he spent enormous parts of the profits on making the house even more interesting. Nor did they mind too much that he received the most expensive foods and the best dining room for himself. But when he began feeding the costliest imported wines to his pet dachshund it was too much. That was some years ago.

★ ★

Gwen Bristow is working on a novel about life in modern California. Her previous books, three novels dealing with Louisiana history, "Deep Summer," "The Handsome Road," and "This Side of Glory," will be brought out later this year in one volume, probably under the title, "Louisiana Trilogy." Though her past is connected with Louisiana (she was once a reporter for a New Orleans paper) Miss Bristow now lives in Beverly Hills in the best Hollywood manner, with a private swimming pool and everything.

★ ★

E. G. Pinkham submitted his first book, "Aunt Elsa," under a pseudonym. And he didn't even send it in to the publisher himself. Instead it was offered by a friend who had persuaded him to let the novel, a quiet story of an elderly New England lady, be seen. Not until the book was accepted was the author's name revealed or his address known to his publisher. He was born in New England, has worked on newspapers in many parts of the United States and abroad, and is now retired and living in California.

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Trade and the World

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF WORLD TRADE. By J. B. Condliffe. New York: W. W. Norton. 1940. 427 *pp.* $3.70.

Reviewed by ERNEST G. DRAPER

PROFESSOR CONDLIFFE is discouraged and understandably so. He has labored long in the interests of international good-will—in the Economic Intelligence Section of the League of Nations, where he wrote the "World Economic Survey" annually from 1931 to 1937, and later with the International Studies Conference. He was the rapporteur of the latter organization at its meeting in Bergen in August, 1939, the main topic of which was, ironically enough, "Economic Policies in Relation to World Peace."

This book, which is based in large part on materials and memoranda prepared for the Conference meeting mentioned, is more concerned with the destruction of world trade in the twenty-odd years following the first World War than with plans or proposals for its reconstruction. There is an able and informative account of the introduction of trade quotas, exchange controls, and bilateral arrangements; their development into discriminatory weapons of trade warfare; and the tendency of governments in the end to make a virtue of the elaborate system of controls and substitute products forced upon them by the necessities of a disordered world.

In his analysis of the causes of these developments, Professor Condliffe elaborates the thesis that "politics" (nationalism) won an insidious victory over "economics" (free enterprise in the main). This reader feels that the rapid breakdown in the 1930's of the world economic development of the nineteenth century, to the broad principles of which Professor Condliffe would like to bring us back, is attributable less to the blundering or outright malevolence of politicians than to a change in the economic environment. The necessity to substitute intensive for extensive capital development, the increasing role in industrial fluctuations of producers' and consumers' durable goods, and the economic dislocations of the world war, covered up for a time by large-scale international lending, have rendered the instability of economic life vastly greater today than fifty years ago. This instability, with its threat to national social structures, has probably been a more significant cause of deterioration in world trade than ill-considered political action—although there have been some notable examples of the latter in recent history.

With respect to the reconstruction of world trade, Professor Condliffe is more realistic. He foresees the development of larger trading areas as a consequence of this war, in contrast to the smaller ones which emerged from the last, and looks forward to the continuance of international cartels within a framework of governmental restraint or even planning. He suggests that if Germany wins the war, the lines of world trade development are already established; but that if the British Empire emerges victorious from her present trials, the United States will have an important role to play in determining the emphasis on national or international action. In general he places more weight on readiness to coöperate in the postwar world than on forms of coöperation.

Professor Condliffe's description of the symptoms of world trade pathology is admirable. Perhaps his diagnosis is, in places, somewhat over-simplified and, as he intimates, the forecasts must be tentative at this stage of world events. Nevertheless, the whole picture he paints is exceptionally interesting and clear-sighted.

Ernest G. Draper is a member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

Sinews of Peace

AN ECONOMIC SURVEY OF ANCIENT ROME: Volume V—Rome and Italy of the Empire. By Tenney Frank. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press. 1940. 445 + XVI *pp., with general index volume.* $5.75.

Reviewed by GILBERT HIGHET

ONE evening in Oxford, I heard four distinguished historians ask one another why the Roman empire fell. They did not even mention the popular delusion that it fell because it was wicked—for of course it did not really totter until it was thoroughly virtuous and officially as well as privately converted to Christianity. But they agreed on one point: the Empire had to pay both for its own faults and for the blunders of the Republic. After that, their beliefs were far more widely different than I could ever have imagined.

One held that the real Romans, and the Italians, who were their strong cousins, had died out by the time of the barbarian attacks, and had been replaced by Oriental slave stock—a stock which had cleverness but no wisdom, industry but no courage, branches but no roots. That may well be true. Certainly the civil wars and the auto-

Thought that is spurred by today
That is shaped by classic form
Blazoned by a timeless emotion

CONRAD AIKEN

A Sonnet Sequence

And in the Human Heart

"Aiken has used an old form for a profound modern expression . . . in these sonnets he has retained all the richness of imagery and the music of words that made the *Preludes* so fine, and in addition he has combined, as rarely before in verse, the highest thought and imagination with the passion that usually marks the poetry of love."

—CLAYTON HOAGLAND, *The New York Sun* $1.50

DUELL, SLOAN *and* PEARCE, NEW YORK

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cratic emperors killed off much of the best racial stock, and pleasure and leisure extinguished still more of it. But another of the experts objected that the Roman system was strong enough to stand the infusion of vast quantities of new blood, and to hold up a failing morale, for centuries more than it did. He held that all the Romans lacked was modern machinery—in Spengler's language, they lacked the will-to-power in technics.

The third historian roundly accused the influence of the Church and of other-worldly ideas, calling them acquiescent in the collapse of the country. The inevitable end of quietism, when faced with a determined enemy, he said, is extinction. But the fourth speaker thought all this too spiritual. Money, he said, was at the root of Rome's power and of Rome's weakness. The Empire at last came to cost more than it was worth.

During the last years of his life, Tenney Frank of Johns Hopkins had planned and almost completed a great Economic Survey of Rome, in which he was assisted by leading economic historians of both Europe and America. He himself wrote the first volume, on the Republic; and at his death he left behind an incomplete fifth volume on the Roman Empire. Quiet, concentrated, efficient, it is a model of scholarly clarity and freedom from dogma. But it is greatly to be regretted that Frank's premature death deprived us of his considered judgment on the last, the supreme problem. For this volume, after describing the economic life of Italy under the Empire in some detail, stops short without the long concluding chapter which would have gathered all the wandering threads. It does not treat the strange financial policy of Diocletian—the monarch who actually fixed by decree throughout the whole Empire the price of every single saleable article; nor does it trace the final dissolution of the whole economic system into the barter and serfdom and particularism of the Dark Ages. The editors have, however, inserted one of Frank's lectures to help in filling the gap; and in its last words it describes the fall of Rome in terms which sound not only true but startlingly immediate: "the failure of vision on the part of the landed gentry; their willingness to betray the free yeomanry for the sake of profitable estates worked by slaves; and their readiness during the Empire to accept a totalitarian regime for the sake of the prospect of personal safety."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 355)
OGDEN NASH
THE FACE IS FAMILIAR

Come megrims, mollygrubs, and collywobbles!
Come, gloom that limps, and misery that hobbles!
Come, also, most exquisite melancholiage.
. . . . . .
This is my hour of sadness and of soulfulness,
And cursed be he who dissipates my dolefulness.
("So Penseroso")

Just published — the new book by the "TAR HEEL EDITOR"

Josephus Daniels

EDITOR IN POLITICS

REVEALING, uncensored memoirs from Cleveland to Wilson, with pen pictures of national and state leaders . . . bishops, tobacco trusts, railroad battles, and sweet family life . . . the horse that went to heaven and the beetle that flew down Bryan's throat. 644 pages, illustrated, $3.50

The University of North Carolina Press, *Chapel Hill, N. C.*

Scandinavian Writers

SIX SCANDINAVIAN NOVELISTS. By Alrik Gustafson. Princeton University Press (American-Scandinavian Foundation). 1940. 367 *pp.* $3.50.

Reviewed by EINAR HAUGEN

IN these unhappy times, when the light from Scandinavia is under at least a momentary eclipse, it is cheering to hail the appearance of a solid and appreciative study of Scandinavian literature. In former days America has taken many of these novelists to her heart. Today, through the lurid light of what may be the Scandinavian Götterdämmerung, we are offered the chance to take stock of their abiding value.

Three of the names here presented will be strange to most present-day Americans: Jonas Lie, and Jens Peter Jacobsen, lights of the 1880's, and Verner von Heidenstam, Swedish lyricist. One will have been more familiar to our parents than to us, namely Selma Lagerlöf, over whose "Gösta Berling" many an American tear has been dropped. Only the last two are still household names among American literati, figures vivid to our intra-war generation: Knut Hamsun, and Sigrid Undset.

But whether they are dead or alive, their significance is vivified for us in Gustafson's pages. With tact, learning, and genuine enthusiasm he builds up a picture of six great novelists, each of whom has moulded a truly fascinating world of the imagination out of the materials life had to offer. Through the detailed, painstaking analysis of these page we gain an unmatched panorama of the past half-century of creative art in Scandinavia. We meet men and women intensely preoccupied with the problems of life, love, and literature.

The six essays are similar in their handling of material: each sets the stage with a striking introductory episode, then sums up the formative influences on the author, and then launches into a detailed analysis of the writer's masterpiece. Professor Gustafson achieves a centrality of effect by not scattering his comments over the writer's entire production, except in passing: his attention is fastened steadily on the great work, which he illuminates by partial retelling, quotation, comment, and analysis.

Professor Gustafson has here presented America with a new and fascinating picture of literary Scandinavia, perhaps the soundest and most mature work in this field that has yet appeared in the English language.

Einar Haugen is a member of the University of Wisconsin faculty.

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(*Continued from page 4*)

ly revealed, that all of the circumstances of the narrative have occurred between the dropping of a body and the stretching of a rope magically convert this structure into a valid drama? No, the effect of the story is solely in the "snapper"; it is much the same as if one learned in the last scene of Hamlet that Hamlet was a ghost, too, like his father, or that his father was still alive, practising parlor magic.

The fantasy for my money, as we purists say, is one in which the fantastic premise is known to the reader from the start of the story. Three of the most entertaining novels I have read recently are of this genre. "The Flying Yorkshireman," and "The Sword in the Stone," and "The Survivor." Oh, yes, these things are quite respectable in the book publishing business—still by far the most liberal field of literary expression. Even motion pictures and radio are somewhat ahead of the standard magazines in the field of fantasy—"Dracula," the very great picture called "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," the very silly one, "King Kong," "Tarzan of the Apes," and so on.

In spite of Orson Welles, the Martian invasion is not one of H. G. Wells's better imaginative stories and in spite of hundreds of imitations in the magazines of fantasy or so-called "scientifiction," "The Time Machine" doesn't seem to me to amount to a great deal, either, except that it was first or early in the field of capitalizing a new notion in physics. The stories by H. G. Wells which are not generally imitated are such elegant little ideas as the story of the magic shop, the man who could do miracles, and the time accelerator. I have always been sorry that he did not apply this last notion to a novel—it had possibilities of many kinds. However, his fancy is so rich that he can afford to be abrupt with his notions.

Nor must the fantasy run completely wild. The story in which all things are possible seems to me extraordinarily dull because there is no conflict. Mr. Wells has taken care of this item in "The Man Who Could Work Miracles" by limiting the imagination of the hero, establishing a governor on the limitless powers of the hero by not giving him enough imagination to use them. Curiously enough, two of the most popular narratives in the field of "Scientifiction" (a word coined by the magazines which do fancies based on current scientific hypotheses—rocket ships, fourth dimensional stuff, and so on) are subject to this error. To me, E. E. Smith's "Skylark" stories and the "Superman" episodes, besides being clumsily written, are as dull as ditchwater because there is no possible way for the hero to lose out. When the pilot of the Skylark finds himself in a difficulty he quickly works out a ray, formula or dimensional trick which is more invulnerable—and if you think that "invulnerable" is not subject to modification you should read the stories—than the one that has failed him. "Superman" has only the handicap of not wanting to reveal himself to human beings as the ineluctable force he is—this is not enough to produce a truly dramatic struggle, even if the narrative thread were not flimsy and cheap.

Many literary crimes are entitled to call Mr. Wells and Jules Verne "Papa." They did not know what they were starting, of course, but neither did Peer Gynt when he bred an imp on the Elf King's daughter by an unsatisfactory exercise of his imagination. Mr. Wells started the space flights, time machines, overgrown insects, transplanted brains—possibly Bassett Morgan set the pattern in this matter—ray weapons, etc., which have been altered and reiterated in scientifiction times without end—no Amen.

It is needless to reiterate that most of our very greatest writers in every age have indulged in these fancies. There is hardly a classic writer who has not had a try at fantasy and it would be tactless to enumerate here the authors who put on dark glasses and false moustaches and contribute to the dozen or so "pulps" in the field; also there would be some scandals for the intelligentsia if spies made Mr. Einstein Santayana Swinburne reveal what magazine he was smuggling down a dark alley under his jacket.

This article will constitute a foreword in a new anthology, "The Other Worlds," edited by Phil Stong, to be published by Wilfred Funk.

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YEARS OF ART: The Story of the Art Students League of New York. By Marchal E. Landgren. McBride: 1940. 367 *pp., with index.* $4.50.

In 1875, the facilities of the old National Academy Schools being insufficient to meet the needs of many aspirants in the fine arts, a group of students and artists founded a voluntary, coöperative school which soon assumed the title The Art Students League.

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The novel plan worked admirably. Students crowded the studios. Teachers came and went, a few of rare zeal and capacity, such as Chase, Henri, and Du Mond, fortunately still active at the League, carried on for years. Probably a good majority of our best painters and sculptors have at some time or other and in one way or another been connected with the League.

In the limited space of a small book of which more than half the pages are devoted to illustration, only a brief and factual record is possible. This is fully given, and it is useful for reference. The flavor of this eminently liberal enterprise has in the main to be read between the lines and divined from the illustrations.

F. J. M., Jr.

Fiction

A TRAVELER IN TIME. By Alison Uttley. Putnam. 1940. 306 *pp.* $2.50.

The native grace that so many English authors can command when writing of their countryside adorns this novel of an English child on an English farm reliving one of the tenderest and most tragic chapters of England's history. "A Traveler in Time" tells the story of young Penelope Taberner Cameron who is sent from her parents' house on Cheyne Walk to rest and recover her strength at Thackers, the Derbyshire farm where her mother's family has lived for hundreds of years. In Elizabeth's reign Thackers was the country seat of Anthony Babington, an impassioned and ill-fated partisan of Mary of Scotland, and in its chambers were hatched many abortive plots to effect the escape of the Scottish Queen. To the young visitor from London everything about Thackers spells enchantment; she is surrounded by fields and buildings and household objects which have been in continued use for centuries. Before long she has become a traveler in time, moving between the personages of Thackers's past and its present, divided in her love between her existing uncle and aunt and the dear sixteenth-century friends whose troubles and ambitions she shares when she goes among them.

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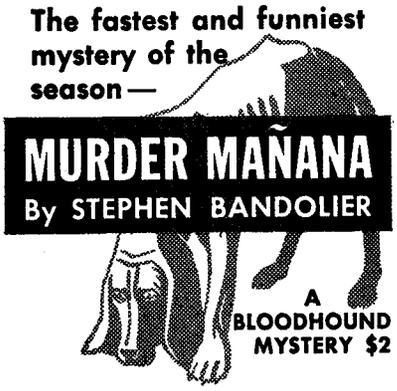

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THE SECRET VANGUARD *Michael Innes* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Shooting of minor British bard stirs curtain that forthwith rises on espionage-drama of Scottish highlands with Insp. Appleby starring.	Braw heather mixture of narrow escapes, desperate villainy, and Swinburnian sleuthing, with castellated conclusion that calls army and air-force into action.	Extra good
MURDER MANANA *Stephen Bandolier* (Duell, Sloan & Pearce: $2.)	Murders of Manhattan pale beside Corcovadian crime, as discovered by Bruce Windward, Center St. reporter on South American trick.	Dissolution of Nazi murder mob excitingly portrayed, with skittish time-bomb playing important part in lurid and lickerish proceedings.	Wild and woolly
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DEATH AT THE HELM *John Rhode* (Dodd, Mead: $2.)	Scotland Yarders prove that tragic English lovers had been criminally poisoned, but Dr. Priestley supplies finishing touches.	Intricate puzzle worked out in customarily meticulous Priestley style. Deliberate, well-characterized, and mystifying.	Good
DEATH IN ECSTASY *Ngaio Marsh* (Sheridan House: $2.)	Poisoned chalice slays rich woman devotee of unpleasant London religious cult. Insp. Alleyn solves it.	Early and extremely talky example of New Zealand writer's work. Murder method cleverly devised.	Agreeable

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cle Barney. But her joys are eloquent, too, and there is no special pleading in her conscious delight in Thackers, where things go on as they have always gone, surviving times of horror and the ruined hopes of individuals. Neither is there room for skepticism in the reader's mind, confronted by Mrs. Uttley's calm faith in the enduring beauty that is forever England.

F. S.

Miscellaneous

THE ELEMENTS OF LETTERING. By John H. Benson and Arthur G. Cary. John Stevens. 1940. $3.

This small book has in it more sense and less rubbish than most. In a compact and very agreeable form its hundred and thirty pages manage to tell about lettering in a straightforward way, and to give the impression of a fresh consideration of an old subject.

A somewhat conventional arrangement of the contents divides the book into three parts: theoretical, practical, and historical. There is little new to be said in any of these fields, but I know of no one who has written about them save Eric Gill who has had experience in plane surface lettering (with brush or pen) and also in cutting letters in stone. This third dimensional consideration adds to the value of the book.

The treatment of each of the three divisions is definite but not involved in too much detail. The authors compare it to a map which limits itself to a few important geographical facts but which is nevertheless more useful as a general guide than a more detailed map. They have got into the book the gist of the whole matter, with enough illustrations to be helpful. Small pictures are printed down the margins. There are some plates of typical and of historical letters, but there are no "pattern" plates as such, from which the student may deliberately copy. We count this a good thing, for most of the hand books on lettering run heavily to such meretricious aids. The book is a statement of sound principles, and more valuable than most lettering books.

C. P. R.

TORCH OF CIVILIZATION. By Matthew Luckiesh. Putnam: 1940. 269 *pp.* $3.

The conquest of disease and the conquest of darkness share first place in the list of contributions of science to civilization. Even modern medicine has not changed our habits of life as radically as has the lighting industry. The story of that achievement is an old one and familiar. Yet there is always more to be said. Within the past two years cold electric light has come to popularity, following its clean, soft service at the two world's fairs, and today cold chemical light is at the threshold.

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The present book is the broadest of them all. The first half is historical, from the time man first came indoors to live under the glow of a tiny lampflame until the immediate past of the efficient electric filament. Many forgotten chapters lie between. The second half is of today, and covers the new fluorescent lamps, the future chemical light, and the spectacular giants in searchlights and beams. Most interesting is his discussion of the lighting art, indoors, outdoors, and in decoration. Dr. Luckiesh lives in a world of light and color. He has no difficulty in conveying its heavenly quality. His book is one for every growing youngster and for all who do not yet realize the creative power of science.

G. W.

Philosophy

FROM DESCARTES TO KANT. Readings in the Philosophy of the Renaissance and Enlightenment. By T. V. Smith and Marjorie Grene. University of Chicago. 1940. 899 *pp.* $4.50.

Those who teach undergraduate courses in the history of philosophy these days are impaled on the horns of a dreadful dilemma. Either they can go directly to the sources and read the "great books" with their students in the manner of Mortimer J. Adler, or they can teach the history of ideas in terms of trends and developments, place it in a general historical and sociological frame of reference, and contribute choice bits of biographical gossip along the way to whet the student's curiosity. The consequences of pleasing Mr. Adler are to leave serious gaps in the continuity, to cover in the space of a year only a small amount of material, and often to scare the wits out of the neophyte to whom concepts like the "transcendental unity of apperception" of Immanuel Kant are monstrous apparitions of a diseased imagination. The consequences of the second alternative are to fill the student's mind with a vast confusion of names and titles and to allow the whole enterprise to suffer from superficiality.

Trying to grasp both horns of the dilemma, T. V. Smith and Marjorie Grene have put together in this book some of the important philosophical works of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including excerpts and sometimes entire essays of Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Leibnitz, Newton, Locke, Berkeley, Hume, and Kant. In addition the book contains short selections from Erasmus, Galileo, and Bacon to illustrate Renaissance humanism and "the new mechanical philosophy," and well-written introductions to each section which present condensed bibliographical data for each philosopher, summarize his doctrines, and provide some continuity in terms of the work of lesser figures. The book obviously doesn't solve the dilemma of the instructor and one could furthermore quibble about the works included, as for example in the case of Berkeley. In general, however, the editors have made a judicious selection and their anthology represents a useful addition to the library of readings in philosophy for amateur and professional alike.

R. B.

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						1-V	2-X	3-G	4-C	5-Q	6-H	7-N	8-D	9-L	10-U	11-O		
	12-I	13-U	14-F	15-R	16-G	17-X	18-P		19-O	20-F		21-B	22-C	23-W		24-U		
25-P	26-K	27-X	28-H	29-I	30-J	31-L		32-P	33-L	34-M	35-N	36-W	37-R	38-B		39-P		
40-Q	41-X	42-E	43-G	44-B	45-H		46-L	47-C	48-D	49-N	50-I	51-T	52-B		53-X	54-H		
55-S	56-Q	57-V	58-G	59-N		60-P	61-T	62-A	63-B	64-D	65-C	66-S		67-C	68-R	69-F		
	70-O	71-T		72-O		73-J	74-K	75-O	76-H	77-U	78-P		79-W	80-O	81-E			
82-P	83-A	84-X	85-U	86-I	87-Q	88-E		89-P	90-V	91-N	92-G	93-X	94-J	95-C	96-L			
97-B	98-R	99-D		100-T	101-N	102-O		103-T		104-J	105-M	106-H	107-P	108-Q	109-K	110-E		
	111-M	112-D	113-I		114-F	115-S		116-H	117-W	118-S		119-A	120-N	121-S		122-X		
123-B	124-K	125-L	126-V	127-F	128-U	129-G	130-W		131-P	132-S	133-K	134-W	135-R	136-E		137-A		
138-J		139-K	140-E	141-X	142-A		143-A		144-X	145-C	146-G	147-D		148-M	149-D	150-W		
	151-E	152-D		153-G	154-U	155-M	156-Q	157-X	158-G	159-V	160-N	161-R	162-F		163-W	164-E		
	165-R	166-M	167-F		168-K	169-Q	170-T	171-W		172-F	173-K	174-I		175-L	176-K	177-T		
178-X	179-D	180-V	181-U		182-A	183-K	184-H	185-N		186-K	187-X	188-L	189-I					

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-four words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary ***(1938 edition).***

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Accept what one has fought against (2 wds.)

B. Buddhism of Tibet and Mongolia.

C. French Post-impressionist painter (1869—).

D. One of 100-armed giants who warred against Olympus.

E. Vantage point seat with near view.

E. Instrumental interlude between parts of an opera.

G. Empty, silly doings or thoughts.

H. Rabble.

I. Indigenous, native.

J. Slender, cobweb-like threads.

K. Diminutive, dwarfed.

L. Cherishes.

M. American vegetarian advocate associated with a flour (1794-1851).

N. Loafers, ruffians.

O. Gallop or ride away in haste.

P. Famous story by Poe.

Q. Student or graduate of one English university.

R. Figurine from ancient Boeotia town.

S. "Hero" in title of tone-poem by Richard Strauss.

T. Cycles of nine gods (Egypt. rel.)

U. Authorizes.

V. Causes.

W. Modicum; a small piece of lumber.

X. Play by Shakespeare (ca. 1607).

WORDS

142	143	119	62	83	137	182						
38	97	44	63	21	52	123						
67	145	22	4	95	65	47						
179	112	48	147	8	149	99	64	152				
42	151	164	88	136	140	81	110					
172	114	127	20	14	69	167	162					
153	129	92	146	16	3	158	43	58				
106	54	6	116	76	184	28	45					
189	174	113	29	50	86	12						
138	94	73	104	30								
186	183	168	139	133	124	173	26	74	176	109		
9	175	46	125	31	33	96	188					
34	155	111	166	105	148							
120	101	49	185	35	91	7	160	59				
102	72	80	19	70	75	11						
131	107	39	78	89	32	18	60	25	82			
5	40	169	87	108	156	56						
165	68	98	161	135	15	37						
132	121	118	55	66	115							
61	100	170	51	103	177	71						
85	13	24	154	128	77	10	181					
57	1	90	159	126	180							
23	36	79	150	130	117	163	134	171				
157	122	53	187	178	84	141	2	41	27	17	93	144

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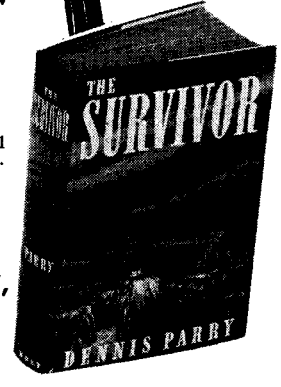

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